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NSC BRIEFING

1 February 1954

CHINESE NATIONALIST FORCES

ARMY

A. PERSONNEL

313,000 combat regulars

107,000 miscellaneous troops

78,000 service and overhead troops

18,000 guerrillas (offshore islands)

11,000 combat-fit POW's from Korea.

45,000 reserves (4-month training)

B. COMBAT ORGANIZATION

12 armies

26 Infantry Divisions

10 Artillery Regiments

2 Independent Infantry Divisions

1 Independent Artillery Regiments

2 Paratroop Battalions

1 Armored Brigade (20-25,000 men)

3 Coastal Commands

7 Coastal Artillery Regiments

8 Officer Combat Regiments (surplus officers)

C. EQUIPMENT

450 Self-Propelled Guns

30 Medium Tanks (M-4)

350 Light Tanks (M-5)

450 Miscellaneous Armored Vehicles

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U. S. AID TO ARMED FORCES

FY 1951 through FY 1953 -- \$383,000,000

FY 1954 -- \$300,000,000

NAVY

A. PERSONNEL -- 40,000

(including 15,000 Marines)

B. EQUIPMENT -- 150 vessels

(including 1 Destroyer, 7 Destroyer Escorts;
2 Destroyers coming from US)

AIR FORCE

A. PERSONNEL -- 68,000

B. COMBAT ORGANIZATION

1 jet fighter-bomber group

4 conventional fighter-bomber groups

1 medium bomber group

2 transport groups

1 reconnaissance squadron

C. EQUIPMENT -- 533 Aircraft on Hand***

75 jet fighter-bombers (F84G)

247 conventional fighter-bombers (F-47, F-51)

38 medium bombers (B-24, P4Y)

12 light bombers (B-25)

140 transports (mostly C-46)

21 reconnaissance aircraft (RF-51)

*** Many of these aircraft are not combat-ready.

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II. Quality

A. Ground forces:

1. American military observers, both those on spot and those visiting, agree that Chinese in ranks are good material, in good physical shape and with high standard of individual training, and could stand up to Communist forces if properly equipped and led.
2. They also agree that equipment is inadequate, that logistic support is especially poor, and that serious weaknesses exist in unit and combined training.
3. They point out that the troops are aging (at least 27 for enlisted men and 28 for officers), that there are too many officers, and that leadership above the division level is generally incompetent or inexperienced and frequently venal, although the commanding general, Sun Li-jen, is believed to be quite competent.

B. Navy: Suffered great losses in men and vessels to Communists in 1949; vessels do not operate together effectively, there is no harbor-defense equipment, officers are generally reluctant to go to sea, and the commanding officer, Ma Chi-chuang, is regarded by the US Naval Attache as incompetent.

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C. Air Force: Morale and leadership are good, but combat effectiveness is low due to inadequate equipment, spare parts and supplies (including petroleum), poor storage and maintenance, and limited operational training and experience.

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III. Capabilities *-(G-2 LANGUAGE.)*

- A. Ground Forces: Incapable of withstanding, without outside aid, a prolonged and determined assault by Chinese Communist forces, and incapable of major operations against the China mainland without large-scale support.
- B. Navy: Incapable of defense of Formosa and not prepared for sustained combat. Armed junks and small naval vessels provide limited gunfire support for guerrilla ground forces and harass Chinese Communist coastal shipping, including vessels of foreign registry.
- C. Air Force: Incapable of providing effective air defense of Formosa against full-scale attack by Chinese Communist air force.

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IV. Political Officer System

- A. American observers have particularly noted the impairment of the combat efficiency of the armed forces by the pervasive political officer system. General Hull has recently described it as potentially "disastrous."
- B. This system is under the direction of Chiang Ching-kuo, the Generalissimo's son, who was Russian-educated and has modeled the system on the Soviet political officer system. It gives the political officers authority which in practice exceeds that of the military commander and makes the latter's task very difficult.
- C. The political officer system has been somewhat modified in deference to suggestions by the US military advisory group, but the Nationalists appear determined to retain it in substantially its present form.

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- V. American Aid (see para. 28, p. 17, NSC 146/2).
- A. About \$383,000,000 to armed forces during FY 1951-1953. More than \$300,000,000 in aid scheduled for FY 1954.
 - B. US military aid program has been criticized by US military officers on Formosa and by journalists visiting the island as being too small for a serious offensive effort at any time against the China mainland, while being larger than needed for a purely defensive effort.

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